

CHANDAMAN

DECEMBER 1979

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Results of Chandamama—Camlin Colouring Contest No. 10 (English)

1st Prize: Sanjay K. Bhat, Kumta-581 343. 2nd Prize: Yashwant Tejraj Gorghate, Nagpur-15. 3rd Prize: Miss Rashmi Singh, c/o 56 APO. Consolation Prizes: Shiela, Rajkumari, Rourkela, Pin: 769 009; Roland D'Souza, Bombay-400 054; P. V. Sunanda, Bangalore-37; Rose Mary Quina, Kakinada-533 002; Miss Anju P. Bellani, Bombay-5.



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GOLDEN WORDS OF YORE

को धर्मो भूतदया किं सौख्यमरोगिता जगति जन्तोः ।

कः स्नेहः सद्भावः किं पाण्डित्यं परिच्छेदः ॥

Ko dharmo bhūtadayā kiṃ saukhyamarogitā jagati jantoh

Kaḥ snehaḥ sadbhāvaḥ kiṃ pāṇḍityam paricchedaḥ

What is piety if not kindness for all, where is happiness without sound health, where is affection without goodwill, what is scholarship without the sense of discrimination?

The Hitopadeshah

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CHANDAMAMA

Vol. 10

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No. 6

Founder : CHAKRAPANI

TOWARDS THE NEW YEAR !

Happy Christmas to you! This issue of your magazine contains three pieces which go well with the occasion: The story of *A Christmas Carol*, a memorable moment from history when Jesus Christ uttered some significant words on children, and our tribute to those children who laid down their lives for a cause that was lofty to them, though in a rather misguided enthusiasm.

The last feature appears in the series specially devoted to the Year of the Child. The series concludes with this piece, as the International Year of the Child ends with this month.

But, for your magazine, is not every year a year of the child?

From January we begin a new series: **MAN-MADE MARVELS**. Supported by exclusive pictures, the series will tell you stories that are there behind some of the great monuments of the past, giving you exciting glimpses of history.

Another important announcement: Our series, the Builders of India's Heritage, concludes with this issue. We begin a new series on the brave and noble children of Mother India who fought for her freedom.

Also, from the next issue, the *Story of India* enters a new phase. Watch for it. We will tell you more about it in the next editorial.



Will you kindly name which, in your opinion, are the ten best books for children in English?

*Miss S. S. Kotur,
Bombay.*

The choice is bound to be difficult. Nevertheless, after a survey of the entire span of children's literature in English, we have drawn a list.

We have not taken into consideration titles which, though popular in English, were originally written in other languages, and fairy tales. Also, not included are short pieces like stories from Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, and works in verse like Edward Lear's limericks or *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*, and works which are contemporary.

On the other hand, although some books were not particularly meant for children, we have not dared to keep them out of the list because of their immense popularity among children.

Here is the list: *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll (1865), *Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe (1719), *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain (1876), *Black Beauty* by Anna Sewell (1877), *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan (1678), *Gulliver's Travels* by Jonathan Swift (1726), *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe (1852), *Treasure Island* by R. L. Stevenson (1883), *The Water Babies* by C. Kingsley (1863), and *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens (1843).

(Readers are requested not to send new questions for a few months. Let your magazine finish answering at least a part of the backload of questions.)



THE VICTORIOUS PRINCE

Long long ago King Ranadhir ruled the land of Vidarbha. He was a great hero. Whoever happened to fight with him was defeated. Songs galore were sung in his praise.

Once a number of kings of the neighbouring regions came together and led a fierce attack against Vidarbha. The battle went on for a long time. King Ranadhir was an expert at strategy. He formed his army into ever new groups and attacked the enemies from unexpected angles. He also managed to breed distrust among the warring kings. A time came when the combined force of the kings broke down. They retreated. Thereafter they gave up all thoughts of rebuffing

Ranadhir. They continued to pay him tributes.

King Ranadhir had no son. His daughter, Princess Shanta, was a charming young lady. All wished that she gets a husband who was as brave as her father. But there seemed to be no prince in the country equal to King Ranadhir in bravery. Several princes dreamed of invading Vidarbha and marrying the princess by force. But their dreams remained dreams.

However, it was different with Vikramdev, the young prince of Gauripur. His father had been defeated by Ranadhir. From his childhood the prince was determined to avenge the humiliation. He had devoted much of his time to building up a



very strong army.

At his father's death, Vikramdev became the king of Gauripur. Neighbouring kings and the nobles of his court congratulated him. But he had no joy. "It is better to be a farmer and live the life of a poor man than to be a king but to live in fear of another king. I am not only going to stop paying tributes to King Ranadhir, but also going to teach him a lesson," the young king told his ministers. They appreciated his sentiments.

Fully prepared, Vikramdev made a surprise attack on Vidarbha. Ranadhir had then

fallen sick. The news of the attack made him restless. As a result, his sickness was on the increase. Even then he sat up and expressed his desire to lead his army himself. But his minister and his physician did not allow him to do that. The anxious king, however, devoted all his thought and time to devise strategies for successfully meeting the enemy. But when he received reports that his strategies failed, he grew even more sick.

The minister saw that Vikramdev's victory was certain. At the same time the physician told him that the king's ailment had reached a precarious stage and that he was not likely to live for more than two or three days. In this circumstance the minister decided to keep the king in the dark about the real situation.

"My lord, our army is pushing away the invaders. Victory should be ours soon," he whispered.

The king recovered his peace. He had a restful night. Consequently he showed signs of improvement.

It was when the Vidarbha army was about to be routed that the king asked the minister

in a faint voice, "What is the news of the battle?"

"My lord, we are about to win, the enemy is now in the defensive," replied the minister. But he wiped his eyes. He was sorry to lie to his king, but he certainly did not want him to die in frustration.

The Vidarbha army was totally defeated the same day. Vikramdev's soldiers reached the threshold of the palace.

"What causes such hulla-baloo?" the king, on his sickbed, asked his minister.

"My lord! Our soldiers, after our victory, are making joyous shouts before the palace," replied the minister.

"I knew that there cannot be a defeat for us as long as I remain alive," exclaimed the delighted king. "But I must praise the courage of Vikramdev. What I had heard about him—that he is a brave young man—seems to be true," the king commented and then fell asleep.

In the meanwhile Vikramdev had entered the royal court. King Ranadhir's commander, minister, and courtiers bowed to him and begged for truce.

The terms for truce were drafted. It was necessary for



King Ranadhir's insignia to be embossed on the document. The minister entered the king's room and tried to remove the signet ring from his finger, bearing the insignia.

"What are you doing, my good minister?" asked the king, waking up.

"My lord, we are obliging the enemy to sign a declaration of surrender. The document ought to bear the mark of your signet ring," replied the minister.

The king felt so much elated that he tried to sit up. "Let me go to the court. I wish to meet that daring young man," he announced.

The minister saw dark. He fumbled and said, "very well, my lord, let me alert the court."

He ran into the court. Prince Vikramdev had occupied the throne. The minister knelt down before him and suppressing his tears, told him all that had passed between himself and the ailing king. He then said, "O Victorious Prince, you have proved your courage in the battlefield; pray, prove your moral courage by feigning defeat before our sick king. He is to die in a day or two. Do what you like thereafter."

It was a queer situation for Vikramdev. However, he could appreciate the minister's love and devotion for the ailing king. He decided to act as requested and left the throne and stood like one who had been defeated.

King Ranadhir was brought

into the court. He gazed at Vikramdev for a while and then said with a smile, "Young man, you are indeed a worthy warrior. You could not have foiled my strategies at the beginning otherwise. Who knows, you could have won a victory had my soldiers not given a fierce fight to save my prestige! But I assure you, there is no shame in being defeated by me. To prove this to the world, I have decided to marry my daughter to you!"

There were thunderous shouts of joy. Vikramdev stood silent.

The marriage was performed with due pomp and show. King Ranadhir took to bed again. He died a year later—after he had seen a grandson born. But, till the end, he did not know that Vikramdev had defeated his army!





THREE PRINCESSES

(Story so far : King Sudharma's three daughters - triplets—were detained in an underground palace. It was because the astrologers had said that they would be safe only if they were separated from their mother for a certain period. But, a little before the period ended, the girls insisted on coming out. The king allowed them to do so. But no sooner had they come out than three giant vultures swooped down on them and took them away.)

4

King Sudharma, with great difficulty, controlled his own agony. But the queen, even after she regained consciousness, remained submerged in sorrow.

"Cursed am I that I violated the condition laid down by the astrologers! Had I waited only for a day more!" regretted the king.

Tears came to the eyes of all

who heard the king lament like that. In the meanwhile dozens of soldiers had spread in all the directions looking for the princesses. Since vultures generally dwelt near burial grounds, the king's soldiers searched the areas around such grounds and, in their wrath, even killed a number of vultures. But that was a senseless thing to do.

"Where are my daughters?" wailed out the queen time and again. "Be sure, I am not going to live long without them!"

"Have patience. We are doing our best to find them out," said the king.

"Your best is not enough. I shall go to look for them myself," insisted the queen and she tried to rush out of the palace. She had to be physically stopped.

The king looked at the court-physician meaningfully. The physician gave a potion to the queen which calmed her down. She passed her time in a dazed condition.

"It is not safe to let the queen remain in this state for long.

She ought to lead a normal life. And that would be possible only if her daughters were restored to her," observed the physician.

"True. Let me take all my subjects into confidence and enrol their help in tracing our daughters," said the king.

Within hours heralds were out in the streets shouting out at intervals of drum-beats: "Some mysterious evil power has whisked away the three princesses. Whoever can find them, or help find them, will be rewarded with the highest honour and a great deal of wealth."

* * *



It was dawn. The king, dressed simply, was strolling behind the palace. A dense fog veiled the garden and the road. His eyes fell on three figures emerging out of the fog. They looked alike. For a moment the king's heart beat faster. Were they his lost daughters? He wondered. But as he advanced towards them and they too came closer to him, he found them to be three boys.

"Gentleman, can you tell us how and when to meet the king?" asked the boys.

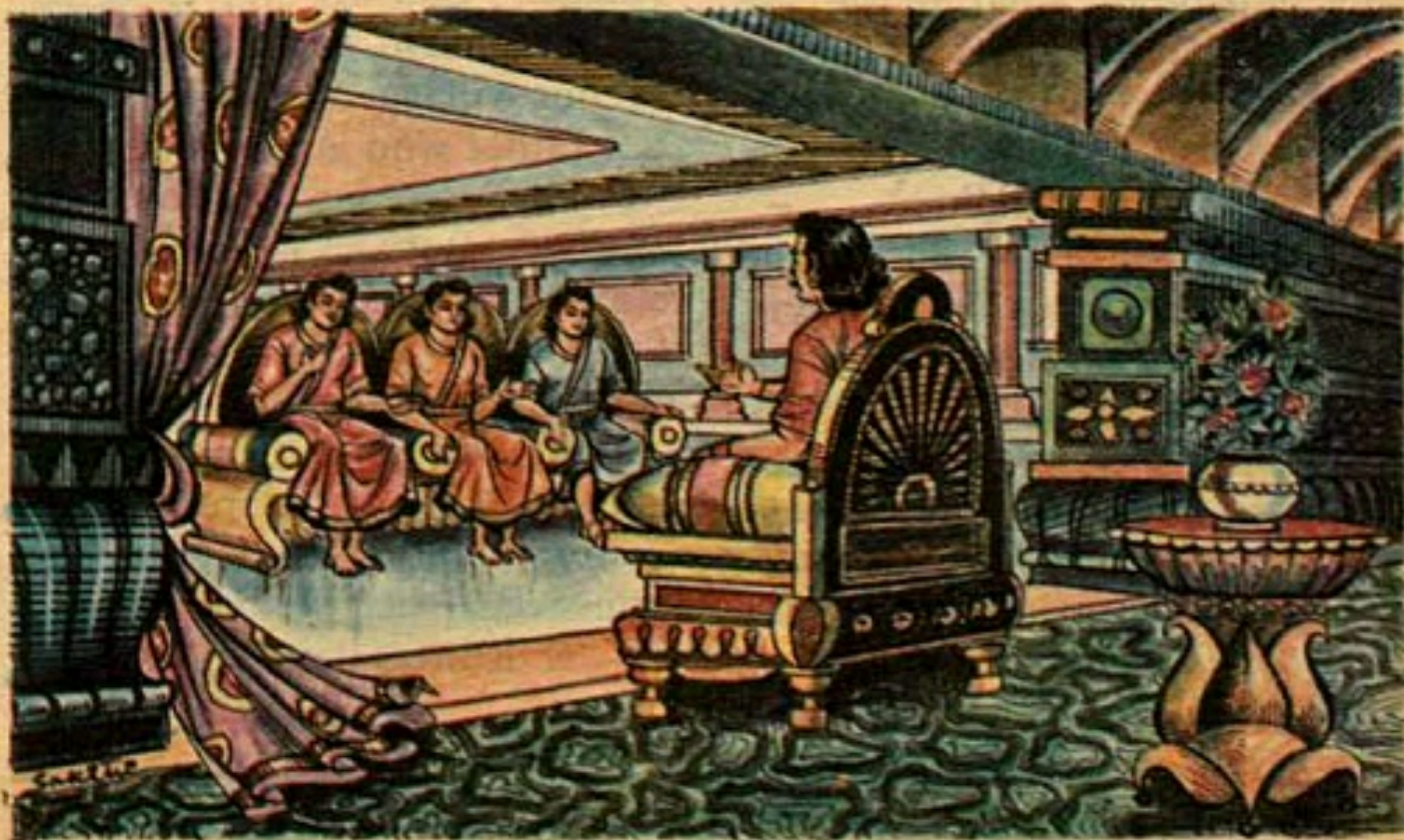
"Why do you wish to meet him?" queried the king.

The boys looked at each other. One of them said, "If

you don't mind, we would like to keep our purpose a secret. Whatever we have to say, we wish to say to the king alone."

The king was amused. What business could these boys have with him? However, he guided them into the palace. From the respect with which the guards at the gate greeted the king, the boys guessed who the man was. Inside the audience chamber the king asked the boys to take seat and himself sat facing them. The boys greeted him with humility and said, "O King, pardon our inability to recognise you as soon as we saw you."

"If you belong to my kingdom, you might have heard of





the misfortune that has befallen me. If I was unable to protect my daughters, what is the use of my being a king? There is nothing wrong in your not recognising me as the king!" the king said with a sigh.

"My lord! The misfortune that has befallen you is of very special nature. Anybody, however heroic, would get upset by it. However, we are here to offer our humble services to you. We may be allowed to go looking for the princesses," said one of the boys.

"You!" exclaimed the king with some amazement.

The boys blushed. Said one

of them, "Indeed, we are too young to impress you."

"The only thing that is common between the princesses and ourselves is, we too are triplets," commented another, smiling.

"We strongly feel, we can't explain why, that we should go in search of the princesses. We could have done so without coming to you. But we are poor. We don't have horses and swords. That is why we are here," said the third.

The king was all praise for the boys in his heart. But he asked them, "Will you tell me who you are?"

"My lord, we are your subjects. We come from a small village. You are not expected to have heard either the name of our village or the name of our father who is no more. All we have as our own is our mother. But she is much exercised over the strange thing that has happened to the princesses. She sheds tears thinking of your sorrow and that of the queen. When we expressed our desire to go out in search of the princesses, she blessed us with all her heart," said one of the boys.

Tears drizzled in the king's eyes. "I feel that the blessings

and the goodwill of such noble mothers would keep my daughters safe. I welcome your offer of help. I shall not only provide you with all you need but also bring your mother along to my palace and make her live here comfortably," said the king.

The three boys—Kumar, Nishith and Uday—were duly introduced to the queen.

She took a great liking for them, but said to the king, "How can such young boys rescue our daughters? Why not send your army?"

"The evil forces which have stolen our daughters cannot be faced by physical strength. Only courage, cleverness and goodwill can deliver the goods, if at all. These boys are filled with

these qualities," replied the king. The queen understood.

The three brothers spent the day looking at the portraits of the princesses so that it would be easy for them to recognise the girls if they see them. Also, they made enquiry into the details of the happenings.

The king's general chose for the three brothers the three best horses from the royal stable. From the armoury the king himself chose the three best swords for them.

The next dawn, according to the astrologer, was an auspicious hour. The three brothers bowed to the king and the queen and hopped onto the horses and trotted out. As soon as they were out of the palace compound, they galloped forth.



ADVENTURES OF MINTOO

BEATING THE BANDITS (2)

Once a year the village deity was bedecked with ornaments which were otherwise kept in a stone chamber. The festival was coming. Mintoo asked the village council to give the festival wide publicity.



And he taught his horse to leap over the pit in the pass. He practised the jump again and again. He then made the pit lightly covered with twigs.



On the night of the festival, the deity was bedecked with glittering gold ornaments. The worship was going on. Jhandoo, seated on a tall tree, kept watch on the road.



The wide publicity given to the festival had attracted the bandits. Their approach was reported to Mintoo by Jhandoo. Mintoo hid behind the deity.





All on a sudden Jhandoo descended on the gang - leader and scratched his eyes. Mintoo who hid behind the deity snatched the bag, and ran out.

The gang - leader himself relieved the deity of the jewellery and put them in a bag as his followers kept the villagers at bay guarding the entrance.



The bandits saw Mintoo jumping onto his horse. They yelled and jumped onto their horses and gave him a hot chase. Mintoo turned his horse towards the pass.



Mintoo took a long leap over the pit. But the bandits fell headlong into it with their horses. They lay swooned or shrieking till they were taken prisoners by the king's soldiers in the morning.



WHAT KILLED THE MONGOOSE



Dev Sharma was a poor Brahmin. He and his wife passed their days in sadness because they were childless.

They had a mongoose for a pet. It received all the attention that a child would have got.

But later they had a son. Great was their joy. They never left the child alone for a moment. One of the couple was always by its side.

One day, at noon, Dev Sharma's wife was away in the river for a bath. Sharma sat guarding the child. Just then he heard from a neighbour that the queen was distributing alms

to Brahmins.

Dev Sharma did not know which course will be more unwise—to leave the child alone or to let the chance of getting alms slip. Soon he found it difficult to check his temptation for the alms. He ordered the pet mongoose to guard the child and ran to the palace.

Upon his return he saw the mongoose at the door. There was blood in its mouth.

"The creature must have grown jealous of the child who is now getting all our attention and must have bit it to death!" thought the Brahmin and, with a stick, killed the mongoose.

But on entering the house he saw a dead snake. He realised what the mongoose had really done. It had killed the snake to save the child.

The Brahmin repented and cried out, "How impatient it was of me to kill such a faithful pet!"

"What killed the dear pet is not only your impatience, but also your greed for the alms," commented his wife upon her return from the river.

FREAKS OF LUCK

Mohsin, the young villager, was on his way to the town. The way passed through meadows and a desert.

"Hello, youngman, where are you going? What is your name?" asked another traveler from behind.

"To the town. People call me Mohsin the Good. What about you?"

"I too am on my way to the town. People call me Musa

the Evil." "The people must be calling you so in joke," commented Mohsin.

The two became companions. When it was noon, both sat down under a tree to cook their food.

"It is no use making two fires when one would do. It is no use opening the food-stocks of both of us when one's would do at a time," proposed Musa.

"That is quite a sound pro-





posal," said Mohsin.

So they began using the flour Mohsin carried to make their breads. The stock lasted two days.

On the third day, while they were passing through the desert, Musa sat down to cook. But he took out from his bag, flour which was just enough for one. When breads were ready, he began eating them.

Mohsin waited for his companion to offer him his share. But Musa seemed to have completely forgotten him. Mohsin kept quiet.

But, by evening, he was very very hungry. When Musa began

eating his dinner, he said, "This time don't forget to give me a share, brother! Did we not share my food-stock?"

"You have no share!" said Musa.

The long walk and hunger made Mohsin miserable. Next day he again implored Musa for a piece of bread. But Musa said, "I'd give you a piece if you let me blind your right eye."

"What will be your profit from such cruelty?"

"Did I not tell you that my name is Musa the Evil? I like doing evil things."

Mohsin endured his hunger for yet another day. Then he told his companion, "It is perhaps better to live with one eye than to die of starvation. Take my right eye and give me bread."

Musa gladly put out his right eye and gave him a small piece of bread.

Next day, upon Mohsin requesting for bread again, Musa demanded his left eye.

"It seems God wishes me to go fully blind. Do as you like," said Mohsin.

Musa put out Mohsin's left eye and gave him another piece of bread. The blind Mohsin was groping his way through the desert when Musa relieved him

of all his belongings and pushed him into a deep well.

Mohsin fell on the soft mud at the bottom of the well. He lamented his condition and sat calling God. Time passed.

At night two Jinns visited the well. They sat on the round stone wall, their legs dangling inside the well, and talked of many things. Mohsin understood that the two were in the habit of meeting there occasionally.

"What have you been doing lately?" asked one Jinn.

"I have possessed the princess and am very happy!"

"Is it not strange that even

the king cannot drive you out of her person?"

"That is the fun. There is not a single good exorcist in the land nowadays. Just sacrifice a black chicken between the girl's feet and I'd be obliged to run for my life. But no exorcist seems to know this much!" commented the first Jinn.

"True, there is nobody who remembers the old good things. The leaves of this very tree leaning over the well are so beneficent! Plaster the eyes of the blind with a pair of them and he will get back his sight. But does anybody remember





this old secret?" asked the second Jinn.

The Jinns departed before the daybreak. Some travellers who were passing by lowered a bucket into the well for water. There was no water, but the bucket brought out Mohsin!

The travellers were surprised. They gave him food and offered to lead him to his destination. But he thanked them and requested them to leave him there—under the tree that leaned over the well.

He then plucked a pair of leaves and covered his eyes with them. When he took them off after an hour, he could see

again.

He gathered a number of leaves from the trees and started for the town. He announced himself as a healer of the blind and proved his merit by curing many.

The king heard of his miracle. He invited him to the palace and asked him if he can cure the princess of her affliction.

"I have tried with a number of physicians and exorcists. All have failed," observed the king sadly.

"Very well, give me a chance. I am confident of good result," said Mohsin.

The princess had been reduced to a skeleton, weeping and laughing by turn. Mohsin lost no time in securing a black chicken and sacrificing it between her feet.

Soon she seemed to come back to her senses. After a long year she stopped weeping or laughing in a mad manner and smiled at her father.

"Young man, please do not leave us at once. Be with us as our most valued guest till such a time when the princess would have fully recovered," said the king.

Mohsin lived there happily, comforts of a prince heaped

upon him. He spent several hours every day in the company of the princess, trying his best to keep her in good humour.

Six months passed. The princess looked as beautiful as a rose.

"My lord, be pleased to grant me leave!" Mohsin told the king.

"How can I do that, young man, when I hear that my daughter has set her heart upon you?" asked the king with a twinkle in his eyes. Mohsin blushed. No doubt, he too was finding it very painful to leave the princess.

Mohsin was married to the

princess. After a few months the king died. As he had no son, Mohsin ascended the throne.

One evening, riding through his capital, King Mohsin saw Musa wending his way through a crowd.

At his bidding, his bodyguards led Musa to the palace.

"How are you, Musa the Evil?" asked Mohsin and he added, "Indeed, I won't say that the people call you so in joke!"

Musa started as if he saw a ghost. But Mohsin laughed and said, "I should not punish you even though you caused me



great suffering. Had you not pushed me into the well, I could not have become the king that I am!"

With his head hung, Musa heard Mohsin's story and took leave of him. Straight he went into the desert and found out the well. He jumped into it and sat still, waiting for the Jinns. He expected them to give out some other secrets by the knowledge of which he could profit as Mohsin had profited.

The Jinns came and sat on the wall and began a chitchat.

"Why are you looking so sad?" asked one.

"I had to leave the princess. I don't know how someone hit upon the right way to drive me away," grumbled the other.

"I hope, nobody overheard us when we met here and discussed the situation last time," said the first Jinn.

"Who knows if someone keeps on hearing us, hiding in the well?" said the second one and he threw his long hairy hand into the bottom of the well. To his great amazement, his snaky fingers found Musa and brought him out. With a fearful laughter the Jinn tossed him: Musa went up circling and then fell to his death.



READING THE DREAM

The king dreamt an interesting dream. He was sure that all his courtiers will be amazed when he would narrate it to them.

But it was a pity that the king had forgotten the content of the dream by the time he arrived in the court. He tried to recollect it, but did not succeed.

He asked his astrologers to try to find out what his dream was. When they said that there was no law in astrology which could enable them to do so, the king got annoyed. He asked other scholars to hit upon his dream and promised a handsome cash reward for whoever can do it.

"My lord, supposing that I bag the reward, can you tell me how I propose to spend the money?" asked a scholar.

"How can I?" asked the king.

"My lord, you are awake and so am I. If you with your wakeful mind cannot say what is there in my wakeful mind, how do you expect us who were asleep to know what was happening to you who too were asleep?" asked the scholar.

The king looked pleased and rewarded him.





STORIES FROM CHILDREN'S CLASSICS

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

It was a cold bleak afternoon. Everything was covered with fog. The houses looked like phantoms.

Nevertheless, it was the eve of Christmas. The old Scrooge sat stooping over his accounts. Yes, old he was; but to say a little more about him, nobody ever greeted him in the streets, no beggar implored him for a trifle. The miser Scrooge was feared or hated by all. He was "a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous old sinner!"

Here is an example of his conduct:

"A merry Christmas to you, uncle! God save you!" said his nephew. "Humbug! Merry Christmas! What right have you to be merry? What reason have you to be merry? You are poor enough!" was the old fellow's response.

His faithful, ill-paid clerk used to go on leave only for a day in a year—on the Christmas day. But to Scrooge, it was "a poor excuse for picking a man's pocket every twenty-fifth of December!" Did he not pay the clerk his salary even for that day?

His partner, Marley, had died seven years ago. Scrooge was all alone. He had his food in a melancholy tavern. But he had his money—and that was a good deal! He cared for nothing else.

But all was to be different with him after that night before the Christmas. That night, an apparition walked up to him through his heavy door. Scrooge felt the creep!



The spectre was none other than the ghost of his partner, Marley.

The spectre was in chain. He had made the chain himself in his life, he said, the chain made with wrong deeds. And the spectre was ready to show Scrooge the chain he (Scrooge) had made for himself too!

The night was indeed quite eventful for Scrooge. He had a series of visions. Among them was a vision of what his own death will be like unless he changed himself.

Besides, he was visited by three Ghosts, one after another. They were those of Christmas Past,

Christmas Present and Christmas Yet to Come.

With the jolly Ghost of Christmas Present, who met him in a blaze of light, he went out to see the world as it would be during the day that was coming. He saw all - young and old, rich and poor - rejoicing the occasion. He visited his clerk's house, the area where the poor labourers live, the heaving sea where the mariners in their ships were preparing for the celebration, and his nephew's house where they were laughing over his niggardliness!

Indeed, the dawn of the Christmas Day saw Scrooge a changed man. He announced himself at his nephew's house for a Christmas dinner and did several acts of charity for the needy. Next day he raised the salary of his clerk. "He became as good a friend, as good a master, and as good a man as the good old city knew, or any other good old city, town or borough in the good old world."

Though Dickens wrote *A Christmas Carol* for all classes of readers, it has been a great favourite of the children since its publication in 1843.



The Forgotten

For two hundred years, from A.D. 1096 to 1291, the Christian rulers of Europe tried to free Jerusalem, the Holy Land, from the control of the Muslims. But Jerusalem was holy to the Jews and Muslims too.

The expeditions which the Christians led to free Jerusalem and to safeguard the Christian pilgrims, were called the Crusades. There were nine major Crusades.

At the beginning, the Christians were successful, but their success was short-lived. They were defeated again and again.

A strange thing happened. The defeat of the kings and generals saddened some children so much that they decided to take up the cause themselves. In 1212, a shepherd boy called Stephen organised an army of 30,000 boys and girls, between the ages of ten and sixteen. These child-crusaders set out

from Vendome in France and reached Marseilles. Some clever ship-owners offered to take them to their destination. The children trusted them and embarked for Palestine.

Many died at the sea. The treacherous ship-owners sold the rest to the slave-traders who, in their turn, sold them in Egypt



INTERNATIONAL

Thousands

and elsewhere.

Almost at the same time, a German boy named Nicolas organised a children's army, 20,000-strong, and led it towards Jerusalem. Most of the

children perhaps died on their way. Others were kidnapped. Not even one of them is known to have returned home.

Although these children were impractical, their zeal and idealism cannot be questioned. Among them were many who could have become great when grown-up.



YEAR OF THE CHILD '79

THE KING'S STRATEGY

In days gone by there was a forest bordering the kingdom of Sudhapur. A gang of bandits found the forest their safe refuge. They harassed and plundered the people outside and fled into the forest. The king found it difficult to capture them.

One day the king announced: whoever can kill the leader of the gang would marry the princess and become the crown-prince.

The gang withered away in a week. It was because the leader who knew that his followers will find it hard to resist the temptation of the reward, ran away for life. Nobody else was willing to become the leader for fear of getting killed by a reward-hungry follower.



The Builders of India's Heritage

SRI AURUBINDO

A great quest began in India long long ago. Our ancient seers sought to know: What is the goal of life? Why does man die? Why does he suffer? Can he be free from suffering and even death?

The quest has continued ever since. Those who devote themselves to this quest are called spiritual seekers. Through the ages such seekers had come to believe that one must leave this world if he is to find Truth; one has to become an ascetic if he

has to find his soul. It was even said that the world is an illusion.

No doubt, many have got spiritual bliss through such paths. But something tells us that these theories alone cannot be the whole truth. If this world is false, why did God create it at all? If one must abandon the society to find his soul, why have the Avatars taken birth in the society from age to age? India's great Vedic seers did not seem to have meant that life and world were false or contrary to





God-realisation.

A profound answer to such doubts comes from a seer of our own time. He is Sri Aurobindo. He says that the world is in no illusion, although it abounds in false ideas and wrong values. Man is a being still in the making. Once there was only matter. Out of it evolved the plant. Then there emerged the animal and the animal was followed by man. But man as he is need not be the last word in evolution. In him remains hidden a much brighter future. It is the mind which marks man today. A far greater power, Supermind, might be his, only

if he aspires for it.

And the Supramental man, the man of future, will be free from all ignorance and suffering. Indeed, he will breathe the consciousness of God.

No wonder that Sri Aurobindo's message is the source of great hope and strength for today's crisis-ridden humanity. Day by day the world is turning towards him.

Sri Aurobindo was born on 15 August 1872, in Calcutta. At a very tender age he was sent to an Irish convent school at Darjeeling. When seven, he was led to England. He studied at St. Paul's in London and King's College at Cambridge and proved himself a brilliant scholar, mastering Greek, Latin and French, apart from English. He was made to appear for the Indian Civil Service examinations, but he did not report for a riding test and thus excused himself from entering the Civil Service.

In 1893 he returned to India and joined the Baroda State service. There he had mostly to teach at the Maharaja's College.

While at Baroda Sri Aurobindo studied Sanskrit and several other Indian languages and

developed a deep insight into India's cultural and spiritual heritage. It was there that he began practising Yoga.

At the same time what drew his attention was the need for India winning freedom from the British rule. The Indian National Congress, formed in 1885, was too weak to voice such a demand. Sri Aurobindo called upon the Congress to become a militant organisation. In 1906 he came over to Calcutta and soon became the most popular leader of those patriots—called the nationalists—who demanded complete freedom for the country.

His idealism and serene personality made him a legend in a short time. His newspaper, *Bande Mataram*, became the symbol of India's resurgence. Poet Tagore hailed him as the "voice-incarnate of India's soul".

The British looked upon him as "the most dangerous man" in the whole country. They threw him into gaol in 1908, accusing him of being the leader of a group of young men who tried to overthrow the British through violence.

Sri Aurobindo was set free after a year, as the government



failed to prove its case against him. It was during his solitary confinement in the jail that Sri Aurobindo had some splendid spiritual experiences. He now realised that his role in the freedom movement had been over. A different mission awaited him. Guided by his inner vision, he reached Pondicherry in 1910.

But the ideas he gave for the freedom struggle—Swadeshi, boycott of foreign goods etc., went strong till the end. It was a golden coincidence that India won freedom on his birthday.

With a few trusted disciples

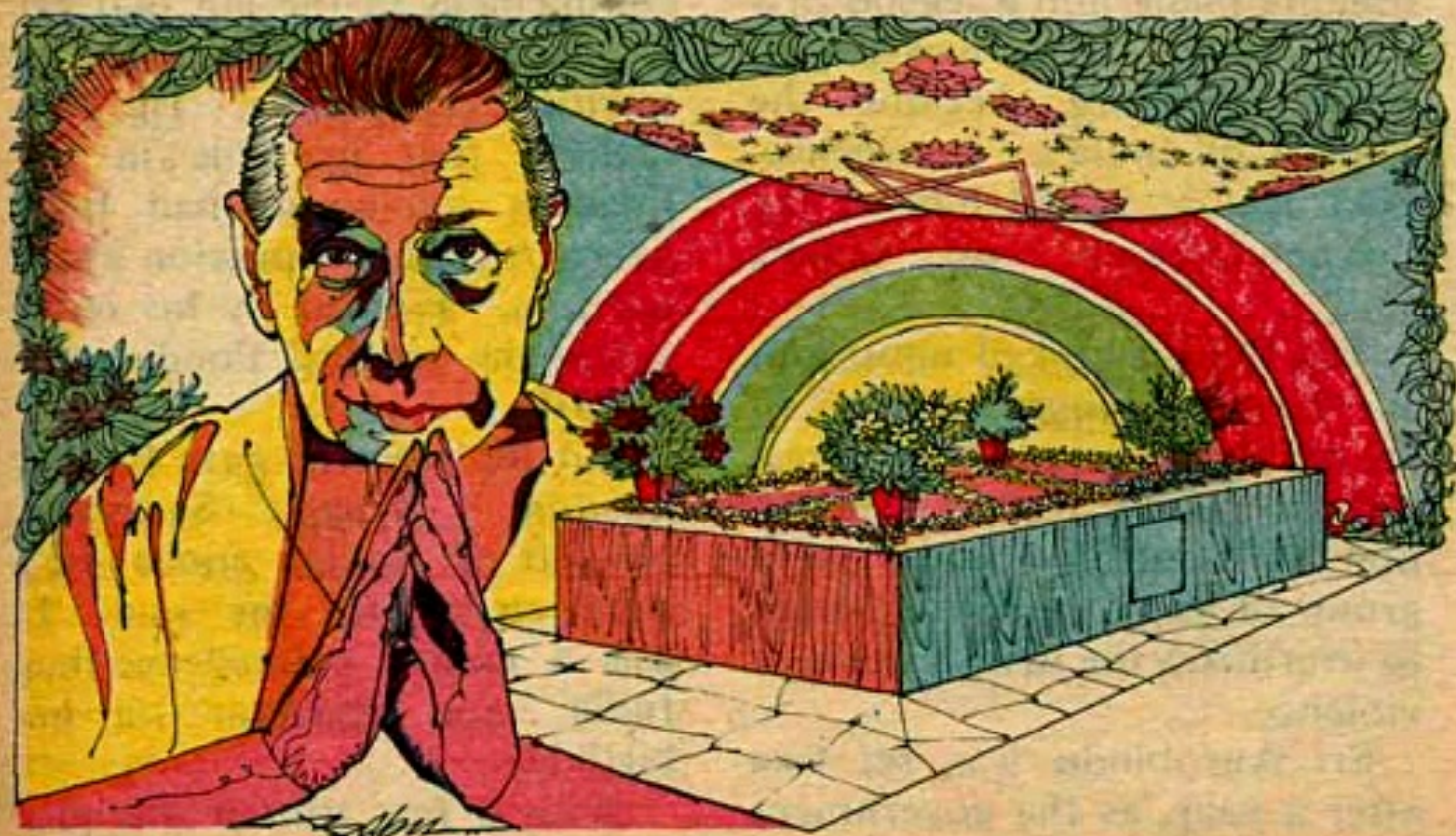
around, Sri Aurobindo plunged into the mysteries of the creation, through his Yoga. His experiences and visions, published in the course of years, made a new evaluation of man. If the present man is an inheritor of his animal past, he also contains in him the seeds of godhead. Sri Aurobindo's goal was to bring into man such a force which will not only release in him all his hidden splendour, but also transform his animal passions and his ignorance. For him all life is the field of Yoga. Nothing is beyond the Divine's domain. But man must be conscious that he is an evolving being and he must offer himself to become the Divine's instru-

ment.

In 1920, the Mother joined Sri Aurobindo at Pondicherry. Born in France, her quest, experience, and her vision of the destiny of man were the same as those of Sri Aurobindo.

With the Mother's arrival, the Ashram of Sri Aurobindo took shape. It is through her that Sri Aurobindo's Yoga, known as the Integral Yoga or the Yoga of Transformation, was revealed to the world. To innumerable seekers scattered all over the world, she has been the source of true strength and their loving spiritual refuge—the Divine Mother.

Sri Aurobindo left his body on 5 December 1950.



THE LAST GREAT JOURNEY



After their success in the Mahabharata war, the Pandavas ruled the land in an ideal way. But worldly gains could not keep them satisfied for long. Yudhishthira, the eldest of the five brothers, proposed that they set out in quest of heaven.

Yudhishthira arranged for the coronation of their grandson, Parikshit. It was a grand event, fitting the glory of the Pandavas. The young Parikshit was blessed by sages and greeted by the subordinate kings.



Thereafter the Pandavas started for the Himalayas, accompanied by Draupadi, taking to the life of mendicants. They had no regret for leaving the kingdom and all the pomp behind.



They began climbing the Himalayas. Long and strenuous was the journey. They passed through several holy spots of this legendary abode of the sages, gods and a variety of supernatural beings. But Draupadi fell dead and then, one by one, the four brothers of Yudhishthira. He alone kept going.

At one point Yudhishthira found a dog following him. Along the dangerous and desolate path, this humble creature proved his lone faithful companion. They walked on for long.



At last, as Yudhishthira stood atop the great mountain, he was met by Indra who offered to take him to heaven. Yudhishthira thanked him, but he would go only if his faithful dog too was let into heaven.

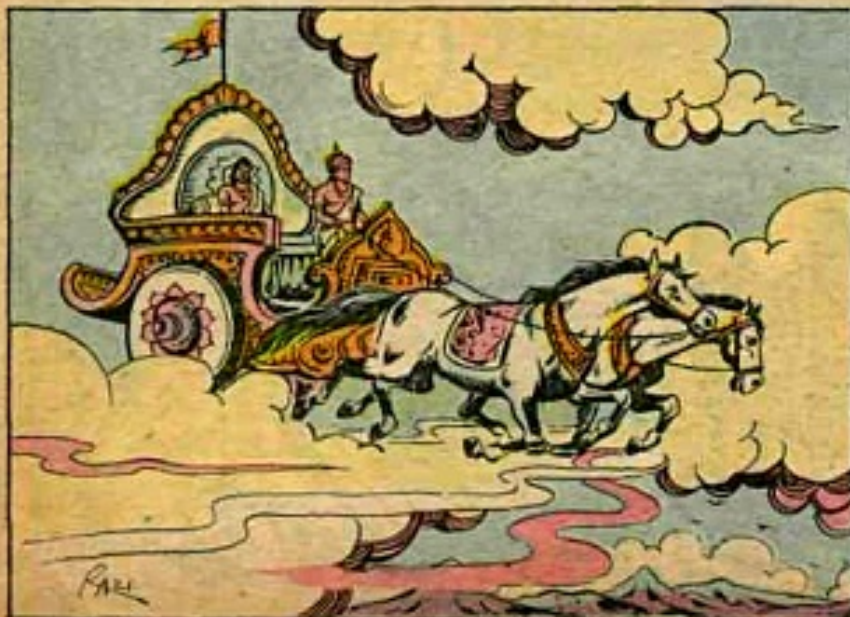
As Indra was unwilling to admit the dog, Yudhishthira refused to board the chariot for heaven. However, the dog soon changed into the god - Dharma. Yudhishthira thus passed the test to which Dharma had put him.





Yudhishthira is led to heaven where he is received by the gods. But he looks for his brothers as well as Draupadi. When told that they are in hell, he insists on going there himself, sacrificing the privilege of heaven.

From the gateway of hell Yudhishthira has a glimpse of the horrible place. He is told that his brothers and wife, after experiencing hell, had gone over to heaven. Yudhishthira had to have a glimpse of hell on account of a small sin he had committed in the war.



Yudhishthira returns to heaven for good. His life is an assurance that it is possible to cling to truth and remain pure even amidst all the worldly duties and activities.



THE COSTLY HOUSE

Raghuvir of Shripur had two neighbours, Shobharam and Mastan. Raghuvir was a good man. So far as Shobharam and Mastan are concerned, we better leave them to our readers' opinion.

One day the two neighbours called on Raghuvir. "Friend!" they said, "We are launching a new business. Why not invest your money in it? You will see the result in six months!"

Raghuvir had a saving of twenty thousand rupees. He handed the amount over to his two neighbours.

No doubt, he saw the result in six months. Shobharam and Mastan, feigning distress, informed him that the business had failed. There was no possibility of Raghuvir recovering even a paisa of the twenty thousand rupees!

But Raghuvir heard from a private source that his two worthy neighbours had added ten thousand rupees each to their savings in the bank.

Raghuvir, however, did not ask his neighbours to explain this boost in their savings. Days passed.

Raghuvir was down with sickness. He knew that his days were numbered. He called Shobharam to his bedside and said, "Brother, I am about to die. I seek of you one favour."

"What is it, brother?" asked Shobharam.

"I must confide to you that I have some buried wealth. But if I reveal the secret to my wife, she might spend it in no time. She is quite a spendthrift," said Raghuvir.

"You are right, brother,"



Shobharam responded.

"Now, listen to me. I have buried my wealth in four corners of this room, dividing them into four equal parts. Nobody knows about it. My request to you is, after I am gone, when you see my wife suffering from difficulty, tell her about the buried wealth. But don't tell her about all the four spots at a time. Only when she has spent the money hidden at one corner and has fallen into difficulty again, tell her about another corner," said Raghuvir.

"I'll do exactly as you say," promised Shobharam, suppressing his excitement. "But how

much have you buried?" he asked.

"Twenty thousand at each corner," was the reply. "You are the only one to know it."

Shobharam felt his heart jumping with joy. He took leave of Raghuvir assuring him again that he will do the needful.

Next day Raghuvir summoned his other neighbour, Mastan, and told him the same thing. A delighted Mastan assured Raghuvir that he will do the needful.

A month thereafter Raghuvir expired. Both Shobharam and Mastan showed Raghuvir's wife much sympathy and helped her and her children perform the last rites of the deceased.

After six months Raghuvir's wife asked Shobharam for a loan of five hundred rupees. "We are planning to move over to the town. My son has got a good job," she said.

"In that case, my sister, why don't you sell your house? Why let it decay? I should be happy to buy it for twenty thousand rupees," proposed Shobharam.

"Thank you for putting the idea into me. Let me think over it," said the widow.

In the evening she asked Mastan, "Shobharam proposes

to buy our house for twenty thousand rupees. What do you think about it?"

"He is a swindler. Your house should fetch twentyfive thousand. I am ready to buy it at that price," said Mastan.

The widow was happy and no less surprised, for she knew that twenty thousand was a good price for her house which was in a bad condition.

Upon hearing of the price offered by Mastan, Shobharam went up to thirty thousand. Mastan then offered thirtyfive and Shobharam proposed to pay forty thousand.

But none of the two had so much money. They met privately and decided to share the house. "It is only on humanitarian grounds that I was willing to pay the widow a high price," each told the other.

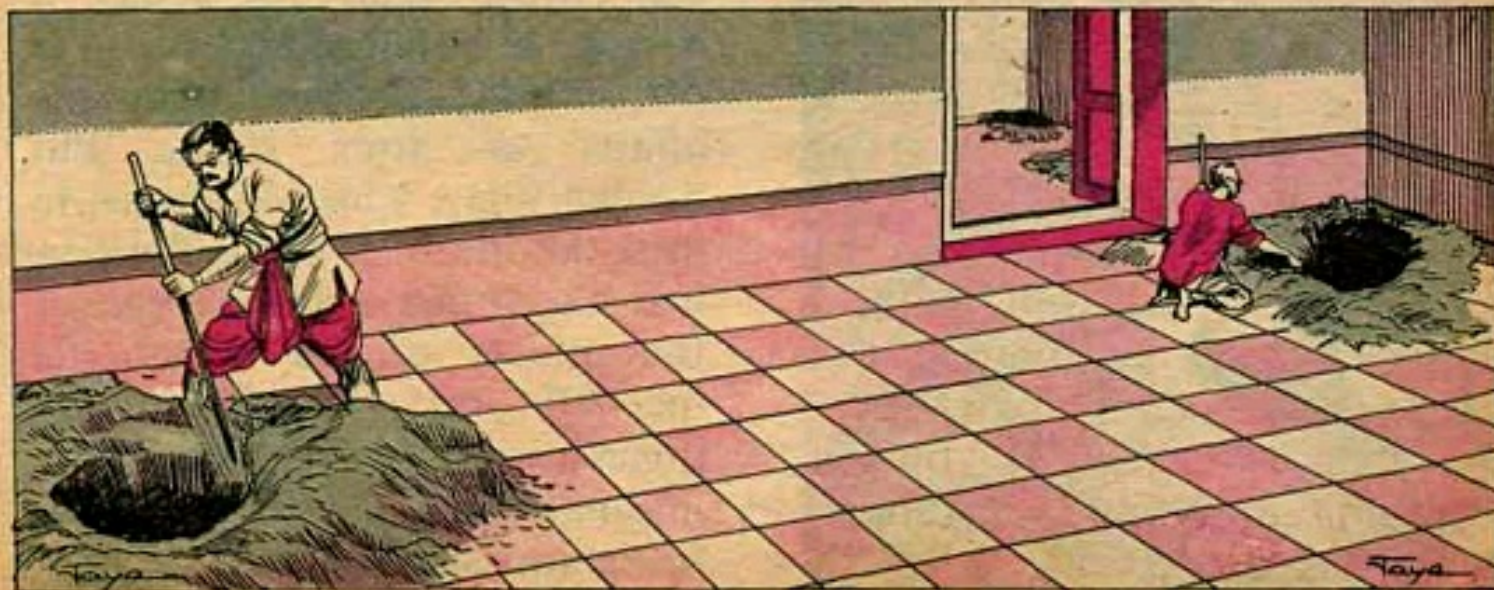
They decided to divide the house between themselves later. The widow transferred the house to them and left for the town with the money.

The night after Raghuvir's family left, Shobharam entered the house as quietly as possible with a crowbar. But on the veranda itself he met Mastan—also with a crowbar!

They looked daggers at each other and then muttered simultaneously, "So, you too know the secret!"

They decided to share the eighty thousand and began digging at the corners of what was Raghuvir's bedroom. Nothing was found. Then they dug the floor of other rooms—in vain. They worked for the whole night and fell exhausted by morning.

They realised that Raghuvir had avenged their treachery.





*New Tales of King Vikram,
and the Vampire*

THE KING VERSUS THE TRIBAL CHIEF

Dark was the night and fearful the atmosphere. Flashes of lightning revealed weird faces all around. Thunder rumbled and jackals moaned and the erratic wind howled.

But King Vikram swerved not. He climbed the old tree and brought the corpse down. But as soon as he began crossing the cremation ground with the corpse lying astride on his shoulder, the vampire that possessed the corpse said, "O King, it seems the wilderness has more fascination for you than the affairs of your states. But Sardar Vijay, who was meant to lead the life of a forest-dweller, had developed a fascination for the affairs of the state. Let me tell you what the consequence was. Pay attention to my narration. That ought to bring you some relief."

The vampire went on: Amar Verma, the king of Krishna-giri, was the cause of fear for the kings of the neighbourhood. He commanded a strong army. The source of his strength was a battalion of daring tribal soldiers. They were recruited from the forest-dwellers. They were as simple as daring.

Virsingh was the chief of the tribal people who lived in the forest that spread along the kingdom's frontier. He was a true friend of the king. Once a year he visited the capital where the king received him warmly. He was happy to see his tribesmen serving the king faithfully.

Once a year the king sent his emissaries to the forest. Through them Virsingh sent to the king a number of presents such as tusks, tiger-skin, and precious stones. Also, he sent a batch of youths every year for joining the king's tribal regiment.

This practice was in vogue for a long time.

Virsingh had a son named Vijay. He was young and intelligent. What is more, he was quite devoted to his father. But he loved to toy with new ideas.



One day he asked his father, "Must we remain subservient to the king forever? Is he not strong with the strength of our people? Why should we send him valuable gifts year after year?"

"We are not subservient to the king, son! He is my friend. It is wise to have a friendly king than a hostile one. Besides, how did the idea that we are quite important come to your mind? Is it not because our people have proved their merit in the royal army? How would anybody know that we are a brave people if our youths got no chance to prove their bra-



very? The chance comes to them only because they are in the army!" explained Virsingh.

"I don't feel as you do, father. I am afraid, the king feigns friendship just because he is benefited by your gesture. Stop giving him gifts and stop supplying him soldiers, and you will see what his real attitude is!" asserted Vijay.

"But, son, I cannot take such a step. However, I am old. Let me retire. Then do whatever you deem fit," said Virsingh. He then called the prominent people of his tribe and announced his own retirement and Vijay's appointment to the

chieftainship.

After a few days arrived the king's emissaries. Vijay told them point blank, "We are no longer in a position to send gifts or soldiers to the king. Our tribe gets weaker because of our youths going away to join the army. We would request the king to send back those of our people who are in the king's service. However, we assure the king that we will fight on his behalf to the best of our ability if ever the kingdom is attacked by any enemy."

The emissaries left. A week later a messenger from the royal court met Vijay and delivered these grim words: "Send a hundred tribal youths immediately, or face the consequences. The consequences are, the forest will be attacked, and all those tribal men who are in the king's army shall be put to death!"

"Is this the king's order?" asked Vijay, taken aback.

"Indeed, the minister himself asked me to deliver this message to you!" said the messenger.

"Very well. We are ready to face the consequences!" roared out Vijay.

The messenger left. In a few days the king's army raided the forest-dwellers. A fight broke

out. The king's soldiers were ignorant of the routes through the forest. The tribesmen easily misled them into crevices or dangerous nooks and captured most of them. The rest fled, defeated.

Vijay asked the prisoners, "Why didn't the king send the tribal regiment against us?"

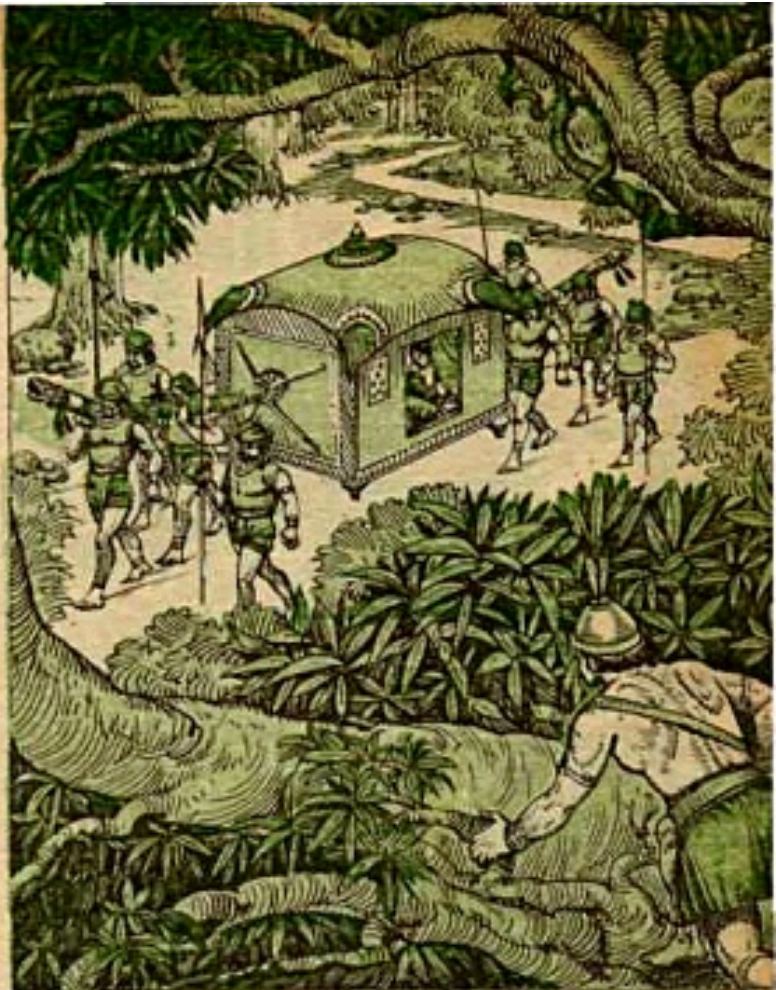
"The tribal regiment is taken prisoner," informed the king's soldiers.

Just then a spy whispered to Vijay that a girl had been brought into the forest by some people who seemed to belong to the royal court. The party, with the girl carried in a palanquin, was in a remote part of the forest.

Vijay sent his people to capture the party. The bearers of the palanquin and their guards put forth resistance, but not for long. They were captured.

The guards disclosed that the girl was none other than the princess, the king's only child and the heir to the throne. She was on her way to her maternal uncle's house. But the minister had asked the guards to lead her into the forest and kill her.

Vijay told the leader of the guards, "I understand the



minister's motive. If the princess is killed, the king will be without an heir. That would pave the way for the minister himself to claim the throne in due course. Very well. Go and tell the minister that we too are fighting the king. Let him come here so that we can conspire against the king."

The minister came too readily. But no sooner had he got off his horse than Vijay beheaded him.

Then Vijay personally led the princess back to the palace and left her before the king and told him all.

The king embraced Vijay and



enquired about Virsingh's health. The king asserted, that Virsingh was his best friend.

"My lord, will you please pass orders to release our people in your army who are thrown into gaol?" said Vijay.

The king looked surprised. It became clear that he knew nothing about the whole tribal regiment being imprisoned. He at once set the regiment at liberty and told Vijay, "If you so wish, you can take them away."

"No, my lord, I have no such wish. Let them be in your service," said Vijay. Then, back in the forest, he sent the king

his annual tribute in the form of gifts and also a batch of youths for the royal army.

The vampire paused and then demanded: "O King! Why did Vijay change his mind? Why did he kill the minister? Answer me, if you can, O King! If you choose to keep mum despite your knowledge of the answer, your head would roll off your shoulders!"

Answered the king at once: "We must not forget that Vijay was devoted to his father. He trusted his father's notion of the king. But his youthful pride inspired him to try the king. He wished to know whether the king respected his tribe or looked down upon it.

"When he heard that the king had ordered the tribal regiment to be put to death he guessed that something was amiss. The king could not have passed such a brutal order. Vijay's suspicion grew stronger when the messenger said of his having heard the decision from the minister.

"Vijay's suspicion that the minister, unknown to the king, was trying to weaken the king's army by making it fight the tribal people, was confirmed. That was when he found out



that the minister was trying to kill the princess.

"Vijay killed the minister because a villain like the minister did not deserve any better treatment.

"He decided to maintain his

relation with the king as of old when he felt convinced that the king really respected them."


No sooner had King Vikram concluded his answer than the vampire, along with the corpse, gave him the slip.

SPOT THE TEN DIFFERENCES



A DAY IN THE HISTORY OF THE RED FORT

some minor attacks on some of his soldiers, he let loose his army on the innocent citizens of Delhi. His cruel soldiers, in the course of one day, massacred 30,000 people, plundered almost all the houses, and burnt down a large part of the beautiful city. He obliged the emperor to surrender to him the Peacock Throne and a large number of invaluable things. But he was looking for the famous Koh-i-noor diamond.

A black and white illustration of a man in a turban, looking out over a city. He is wearing a turban and a long, flowing robe. He is looking out over a city with domes and minarets, which is visible in the background. The city is surrounded by a wall, and there are trees in the foreground.

From Diwan-i-Khas of the Red Fort, Raman's father led the two boys into Rang Mahal which was the apartment of the queens.

"Father, you were to tell us about Nadir Shah!" Raman reminded Dr. Murty.

"That is a sad episode," began Dr. Murty. "Nadir Shah, the ruler of Persia, invaded Delhi in 1739. The reigning Mughal emperor, Muhammad Shah, was not in a position to check him. In fact, he received the invader with a show of cordiality. For a few days the invader enjoyed the emperor's hospitality. Then, enraged by

He sensed that the emperor kept it hidden in his turban. On the eve of his departure, he proposed that as a mark of friendship they exchange their turbans. The helpless emperor looked on as the turbans changed heads—his precious one going to the invader's head; the latter's worthless one coming to his!

"Nadir Shah carried with him 30 crores of rupees in cash, basketfuls of jewels, 1,000 elephants, 7,000 horses, 10,000 camels and hundreds of skilled architects, sculptors, and men and women gifted in other arts."

Ravi and Raman sighed.

"But the invader could not enjoy the booty. Soon he grew mad. He was stabbed to death



while he was in that pitiable condition," concluded Dr. Murty.

The ceiling of the Rang Mahal was made of silver. But that had been removed long ago. At the centre of the hall was a fountain in the shape of a flower. Water from the river Yamuna flowed into it and the small canals that brought the water had in them fish "with gold rings around their heads, each ring having one ruby and two seed-pearls," the boys learnt.

They had to hurry through the other sections of the fort as Dr. Murty had to attend to some important work.



THE PUNISHMENT

This happened nearly fifty years ago. In a certain school arithmetic was taught by Reverend Arulswamy, a well-known teacher. He loved his students as much as his students loved him.

One day the teacher dictated an arithmetical question to his students. "Bring your answers tomorrow," he said.

Next day he called the students one by one and examined their answers. He found out that there was only one student who had not answered the question.

"Did the question prove too difficult for you?" asked the teacher.

"No," replied the student.

"You found no time to devote to it, I suppose!" observed the teacher.

"I just did not care to do it!" replied the student arrogantly.

There was an awkward silence in the class. Rev. Arulswamy looked at the monitor and asked him to bring a cane from the headmaster's room.

The cane came. Rev. Arulswamy approached the defiant student who stood with a sneer, ready to be beaten up.

"Woe to me that I failed to arouse enough interest in you for arithmetic. I deserve to be punished. Here is the cane. Apply it on me," said the teacher, pushing the stick into the boy's hand.

The boy broke into tears. He was never the same again.





THE SAGA OF SHIVA

The demon, Tarakasur, who had been vanquished by Shiva, had three sons: Taraksha, Kamalaksha, and Vidyunmali. They had been deeply agonised over their father's death. For long they remained engrossed in penance. At last Brahma appeared before them and was willing to grant them some boons.

"O God, give us three citadels that can float and fly about at our command; grant that nobody—god or man—can kill us unless he comes riding a chariot that is no chariot, uses a bow that is no bow, and an arrow that is no arrow," they said.

Brahma granted the boons prayed for. Three citadels materialised in the sky. They were strong and beautiful. The three brothers occupied them happily.

But they were not the kind of beings to remain satisfied with just what they had got. Although they had received their boons through humility, they grew proud once they had obtained them. They found it great fun to take their citadels high above heaven and dash them against parts of heaven, destroying much and striking terror in the minds of the gods.

The gods appealed to Shiva to destroy the demon brothers. Shiva was not willing to fight the demons himself; but he condescended to send an emanation of his.

The demons went on a rampage, unchecked. As days passed, they felt more and more sure about their invincibility. Little did they know that an emanation of Shiva was taking a formation to bring about



their end.

The emanation of Shiva went out to seek the proper way whereby to destroy the demons. The demons were armed with such boons that nobody could face them with ordinary chariots or attack them with the ordinary bows or arrows.

The emanation of Shiva made the earth his chariot, with the sun and the moon for its wheels. The Vedas served as the horses for this chariot. Mount Meru served as the bow and the great serpent, Adishesha, became its string.

But what could serve as the arrow to destroy the demons?

The emanation of Shiva invoked Vishnu. An emanation of Vishnu served as the arrows.

The unusual arrows struck the three flying citadels and burnt them down at once. Reduced to ashes, they fell on the earth along with their demon masters.

The mission accomplished, the emanation of Shiva returned to the source from which it had come.

But neither the gods nor the human beings could rest in peace even after the fall of the flying citadels and the death of the three terrible brothers. Another demon, called Jalandhar, created havoc in all the three spheres of the creation. From Brahma he had obtained a boon to the effect that neither the gods nor the human beings, neither the demons nor the ganas, can kill him. Even Shiva or Vishnu would not be able to apply their weapons on him. He led his triumphant march in all the eight directions and drove Indra out of heaven.

There came a time when Shiva had to leave Kailash and Vishnu had to leave Vaikuntha on account of the terror that was Jalandhar. The two great Gods took shelter in the sacred

lake, Manasarovar, and invoked Brahma's Grace. He appeared before them and said, "You won't be able to kill the demon with your own weapons. But why don't you exchange your weapons?"

This was an excellent hint. Shiva took up Vishnu's *Chakra* and Vishnu Shiva's trident, and waited for the demon.

"Don't you know that two formidable enemies of yours are hiding in the Manasarovar?" Narada asked Jalandhar.

In a few strides the demon reached Manasarovar and made a dive into the water. Shiva and Vishnu slipped out to the bank and waited with the weapons ready. When Jalandhar did not find them in the water, he too climbed the bank. At once the two Gods attacked him and killed him.

Around this time a demon

named Dambha, who was an ardent devotee of Vishnu, was blessed by a vision of Vishnu.

"What boon would you like to have from me?" asked Vishnu.

"Grant me a son who would become the most powerful being among all the living creatures. At the same time, he should be a devotee," said Dambha.

"Let it be so," said Vishnu.

In due course Dambha got a son. The boy, named Shankhachuda, had his lessons from Shukracharya. Upon growing up, he went over to Vindyachala and undertook a penance. When Brahma appeared before him, he prayed for a boon that would immune him to all attacks.

Brahma granted the boon and advised him to proceed to Badarikashram, "There you will meet your future wife," said he.



LEGENDS AND PARABLES OF INDIA

WONDERS FOR THE ISLANDERS



In days gone by when Indian merchants led expeditions to far away lands and islands, they often carried a crow with them. If the ship fell into rough weather and lost the right direction, they released the crow.

The crow, guided by its instinct, flew towards the nearest land. The mariners steered their ship following the flight of the crow and touched land.

Once an Indian ship reached a certain island the inhabitants of which had never seen a bird of any sort. The day the merchants would leave the island, some noblemen of the island visited their ship and happened

to see a crow that was kept in a cage.

Great was their amazement.

"What is this?" they exclaimed.

"A kind of bird, called crow," said the merchants.

"What is a bird?" asked the islanders.

The merchants took pains to explain to their guests what they meant by a bird. The excited islanders pleaded with the merchants to let them have the crow. They offered a gold coin for it. When the clever merchants showed reluctance, they kept on offering higher and higher price. At last the merchants parted with the crow for a hundred gold coins.

The crow created a great sensation among the islanders. Hundreds of people flocked to see it. They clapped their hands when it proudly cawed. They fed it with carefully prepared food and often remarked, "How beautiful it is!" "How glis-

tening dark is its plumage!" "How its eyes glitter like pearls!"

The crow grew more and more proud. It laughed at its own past remembering how once it had to feed on worms and waste.

Two years passed and the merchants visited the island again. Knowing the curiosity of the islanders, they had brought a peacock this time. The peacock had been trained to unfurl its colourful tail and dance when commanded to do so. The islanders had never dreamed that such a marvellous creature could exist anywhere on earth. They did not know how much to offer for the peacock.

But the merchants did not keep them in suspense. "A thousand gold coins would

suffice," they said.

The islanders handed out the price happily. The most beautiful garden in the island was set apart for the peacock. Those servants who looked after the crow were now required to take care of the peacock.

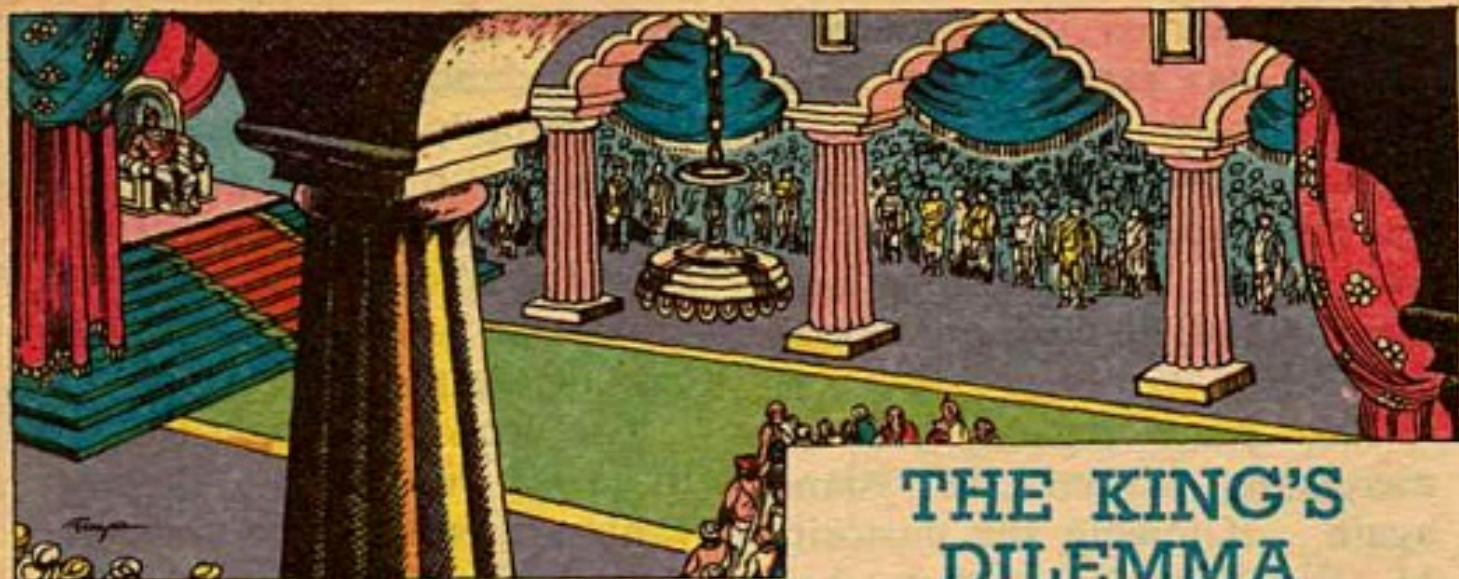
The crow was neglected. If it cawed incessantly, the servants remembered it and gave it some food. But soon it had no strength to caw loudly. Its pride was shattered.

One day the crow found its cage left open. It slipped out and flew towards a meadow. There it began feeding on worms. Hunger made the worms as tasty as the specially prepared food with which it used to be served.

"You can never trust man's curiosity," it murmured.

From the Buddha Jatakas





THE KING'S DILEMMA

Once upon a time there was a king who had only one thought and that was the good of his subjects.

Once while on a visit to the Himalayas he met a great hermit.

"What will make one truly happy?" he asked the hermit.

"True happiness can come to one only through spiritual enlightenment," replied the hermit, but he did not elaborate.

The hermit's words left a lasting impact on the king's mind. He asked his advisers, "How can my people be spiritually enlightened?"

"By being educated in the scriptures, most of all in the Gita," said the advisers.

The king studied the Gita and felt convinced that what his advisers said was right. But

how can the people learn the message of the Gita? His advisers told him again that the pundits of the kingdom may be asked to carry the Gita's message to the people.

The king invited all the pundits who had mastered the knowledge of the Gita to assemble in the palace.

Over a hundred pundits came responding to the call. But how to know how many of them had truly understood the spirit of the Gita? The king asked his chief minister to find this out.

After two days the minister said, "My lord, these are verily great scholars. With my little knowledge, I cannot presume to judge them."

It was at this juncture that Chiranjivi, the wise traveller,

reached the place. One of the advisers of the king who knew him well introduced him to the king.

"Wise man, I wonder if you can help me out of the situation," the king told Chiranjivi and he gave him the reason for his inviting the pundits to the palace.

Chiranjivi summoned the pundits to a meeting and said, "O learned ones, it is said that the Gita is a work of such profound wisdom that one cannot grasp its essence in one life. How did you all master it?"

"The Gita is a very difficult work, true, but it is with deep concentration that I've mastered it," said some.

"It is in my wisdom that I have achieved what is not easy for others to achieve," said some others.

Chiranjivi dissolved the meeting. He then told the king, "My lord, these pundits may be great scholars, but none of them has realised the essence of the Gita!"

"But did you ask them any question on the Gita?" asked the king.

"It was not necessary, my lord. Had they realised the teaching of the Gita, they would



not have claimed that they had done so by their own efforts or wisdom. The Gita is pure spiritual knowledge. One who understands the Gita also understands the fact that such knowledge can come only through one's ardent aspiration on one hand and the Divine Grace on the other. But none of these pundits had the humility to say so," replied Chiranjivi.

The king sent a reward to each of the pundits and asked them to go away. But thereafter he asked Chiranjivi quite pensively, "How am I then to carry spiritual enlightenment to the people?"



"Pardon my impudence, my lord, but let that question not bother you at all. Do all you can to give your subjects protection, education and cultural entertainment. So far as spiritual enlightenment is concerned, it depends on an individual's urge

for it. You cannot give it to anybody through your pundits. But, surely, you can create an atmosphere of freedom so that those who are spiritual seekers can pursue their quest freely," said Chiranjivi.

The advice satisfied the king.

WONDER WITH COLOURS





THE SECRET SCULPTOR

Vijaypal, the king of Chandragiri, was a great admirer of art. A large number of sculptors and painters were in his payroll. He never stopped encouraging them to seek perfection in their works.

Once a year he held an exhibition of sculptures and paintings. He invited entries from gifted artists belonging to other lands too. A panel of worthy critics—most of whom were people of other lands—judged the works and decided which ones among them were extraordinary. The king rewarded their makers.

Rewards for sculptures were almost always bagged by the sculptors of Chandragiri. This was because the court-sculptor of King Vijaypal, Shridhar, was a great genius. He had trained up a group of young men extremely well.

King Vijaypal was very fond of Shridhar. This master-sculptor had not only enhanced the prestige of Chandragiri in the world of art, but also had declined highly lucrative offers from other kings.

It so happened that Shridhar fell sick and died rather untimely. The king was very sad. However, he made Shridhar's son, Shekhar, his court-sculptor, in the way of paying tribute to the memory of Shridhar.

The king did not expect Shekhar to prove as brilliant as his father. But, to his pleasant surprise, it is Shekhar who was voted the best sculptor by the experts from different kingdoms who judged the entries in the next exhibition. They declared that Shekhar was no less talented than the late Shridhar.

But the truth was different.



The piece of sculpture that passed as Shekhar's creation was in fact the work of another young man, Vimal. Shekhar, despite his father's sincere efforts at making him a worthy sculptor had failed to become one. On his death-bed Shridhar told Vimal, his dearest and most successful student, "Continue to patronise Shekhar in every possible way till he has learnt your art thoroughly well."

Vimal was deeply devoted to his teacher. Besides, he had no ambition for fame. His only joy lay in working hard. And such was the secrecy with which he worked that it appeared as if

he did nothing more than assisting Shekhar.

King Vijaypal had a daughter named Mallika. She was extremely beautiful. One day the king thought, "My daughter will marry and leave me in a short time. Also, as she will grow older, the charm she possesses now will begin to fade. It will be nice to make a statue of hers now."

There was also another reason for the king to feel inspired to make a statue of her daughter. Princes from the neighbouring kingdoms had begun visiting his palace to propose marriage with Mallika. Now, Mallika was reluctant to appear before them. Besides, any prince who once saw her would insist on marrying her whether he deserved her or not. That would create problems. They could be shown the statue of the princess instead of the princess herself.

The king decided to entrust Shekhar with the task of making Mallika's statue. In order to serve as the model for the sculptor, he first had the chief painter of his court—an old man—draw a portrait of the princess. Then he asked Shekhar to do the needful.

A special room was allocated

to Shekhar. He was to work on Mallika's statue there. Vimal excepting, nobody was to be allowed in.

The work went on. Needless to say, it was Vimal who went on working on the stone. All Shekhar did was to hand out to him a hammer or a chisel according to his need. Most of the time Shekhar slept or sat dozing.

One day Princess Mallika grew inquisitive. She stealthily entered the sculptor's apartment and observed him at work. The work had not been completed. That is why she could not appreciate it.

Suddenly she heard Vimal asking Shekhar, "I don't believe that the portrait represents the princess. It is just a beautiful picture. If the king had asked me to sculpt out just a beautiful maiden instead of asking me to follow a painting in doing so, I would have done the work promptly."

What Vimal meant was, so beautiful a portrait could not have been the portrait of a real girl. But the princess misunderstood his remark. Besides, she did not like the half-done sculpture.

"I doubt if you know any-



thing of sculpture!" she blurted out. Startled, Vimal looked back.

"Wonderful! Why don't you stand before me so that I can carve out your figure on the stone with greater accuracy? This portrait gives out only half of your charm!" spoke out Vimal. The artist in him had forgotten manners!

The princess took offence. She went to the king and said, "Father! Why have you employed a worthless fellow to make my image? I saw Shekhar idling away his time!"

The king knew that the only man who was with Shekhar was his assistant, Vimal. He was

furious with him. But instead of awarding any severe punishment to him on account of his unmannerly conduct, he ordered him to leave the kingdom. He was under the impression that Vimal was only tampering with Shekhar's work.

A few months passed. The king wanted to know the progress of the work. But the work remained where Vimal had left it. Questioned by the king, Shekhar confessed that all the sculptures that passed as his were Vimal's! He won't dare touch the half-done statue of Mallika.

The king threw Shekhar into gaol.

Then came the time for the annual exhibition. This time a sculpture sent by a neighbouring king bagged the first prize. The judges said that the

sculptor was the most gifted artist they had ever known. All were charmed by the entry.

The king was surprised to see that the prize-winning entry was a lively image of Princess Mallika!

He made enquiry about the sculptor and learnt that he was none other than Vimal who had taken refuge in the court of another king. He had seen the princess only once. But he had almost infused life into the stone image. Princess Mallika herself was charmed to see it.

The king sent for the sculptor. Vimal came and received a great ovation. The king regretted his own conduct towards him. Vimal agreed to remain in his court, but on condition that Shekhar must be set free immediately and be given a regular life-long allowance.



DWELLERS OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

Once a number of women brought their little ones to Jesus Christ to get them blessed by him.

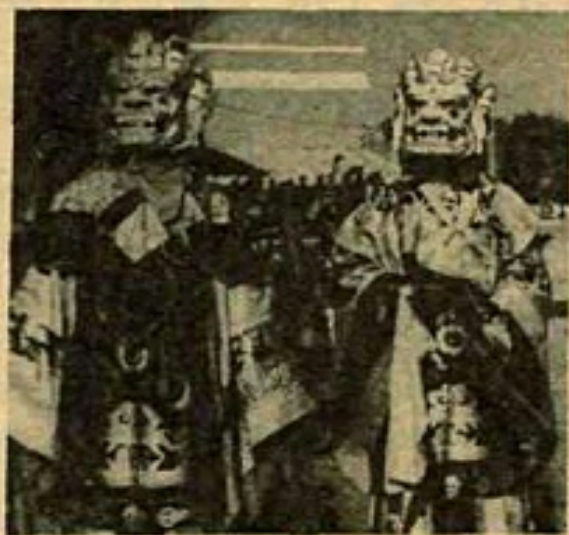
As more and more children were brought to Jesus, his disciples thought that he might feel tired. They ordered the women not to bother him any more and take away their children.

But Jesus who overheard this, said, "Allow the little children to come to me. Forbid them not, for such is the Kingdom of Heaven. Amen, I say unto you, unless you become as little children, you cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

And Jesus continued to take the children to his arms and bless them.



PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST



Mr. Prabhakar Mahadik



Mr. Devidas Kasbekar

Can you formulate a caption in a few words, to suit these pictures related to each other? If yes, you may write it on a post card and mail to Photo Caption Contest, Chandamama, to reach us by 20th of the current month. A reward of Rs. 25/- will go to the best entry which will be published in the issue after the next.

The Prize for the October '79 goes to:
Mr. Soundaram, 23 Sundararajan Street,
Abhiramapuram, Madras 600 018.

The Winning Entry : 'Two To Share' - 'One To Stare'



PICKS FROM
OUR MAIL BAG

Dear Sir,

Yours is the only magazine which fully rose to the occasion of the International Year of the Child with imaginativeness and dignity well-matched. How much love for the cause as well as labour must have gone into the planning of those special features like "International Year of the Child - 1979" and "Stories from Children's Classics", apart from the bumper folktale number in July. Long live *Chandamama*!

A. Hamid and Romesh Kapur,
Camp: Shrinagar

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CHANDAMAMA

AN APPEAL

During the last few years the price of paper has more than doubled itself, and the cost of producing a magazine has become staggeringly high.

While several magazines have increased their price, some have cut down the number of pages and have restricted themselves to fewer illustrations and variety.

We know, however, our readers would not approve of Chandamama trying to economise on these fronts. We are, therefore, obliged to enhance the price of the magazine by 25 paise from the issue dated January 1980. This increase is not proportional to the high increase in the cost of production, but will only ameliorate the situation.

We are sure our readers will view our difficulties as their own, and approve of this step we have reluctantly taken.

Our agents are also requested to take note of this change in the price.

Publisher

